

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Brown County



305 E. WALNUT STREET
P. O. BOX 23600
GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN 54305-3600
PHONE (920) 448-4015 FAX (920) 448-6221

RACIAL EQUITY AD HOC COMMITTEE

Pooja Bambha-Arora, Chair
Rashad Cobb, Vice Chair
Louise Padron, Secretary
Carina Abrego-Koch, Jose Villa,
Tara Yang, Supervisor Megan Borchardt,
Supervisor Amanda Chu, Supervisor Patrick Buckley

RACIAL EQUITY AD HOC COMMITTEE

Monday, July 26, 2021

5:00 p.m.

Auditorium, Central Library

515 Pine Street, Green Bay, WI

1. Call to Order-at 5:05 by Chair Dr. Bambha-Arora
 - A. Committee members present: Chair Dr. Bambha-Arora, Vice Chair Cobb, Secretary Padron, Supervisor Borchardt, and Committee Member Abrego-Koch.
 - B. Supervisor Buckley arrived at 5:10.
 - C. Committee Member Villa arrived at 5:30.
 - D. Supervisor Chu and Committee member Yang not in attendance.
2. Approve/Modify Agenda
 - A. Motion approved by Supervisor Borchardt
 - B. Motion seconded by Vice Chair Cobb.
 - C. Motion passed unanimously.
3. Approve/Modify Minutes of Monday, June 28th, 2021
 - A. Motion approved by Supervisor Borchardt.
 - B. Motion seconded by Secretary Padron.
 - C. Motion Passed unanimously.
4. Comments from the Public- None.
5. Discussion and Focus questions for committee members by Secretary Louise Padron: **See Appendix A**
 - A. Icebreaker
 - B. What adversities disproportionately affect BIPOC?
 - C. What services are currently available in connection with the adversities listed?
 - D. How are committee members connected to the services?
 - E. What are these services associated with Brown County Department?

6. Presentation by Chair Dr. Pooja Bambha-Arora on tools, research, work groups and next steps of the committee followed by discussion:
 - A. Over the last year, the CDC has declared racism a public health crisis. That, along with COVID, George Floyd, and other events exposed racism as a social construct that impacts people of colors' health.
 - B. Milwaukee County was the first to pass a declaration against racism, over 200 counties have followed since then. It is our role to determine how the community can move forward and what the data is telling us.
 - C. Data presented was collected from Achieve Brown County, United Way, Brown County Department of Health, and WI Public Health website.
 - D. In looking at equitable access for all, we must see that if one group of people is suffering, everyone is suffering. We cannot disconnect ourselves from past events such as slavery and the taking of Native land, in the way they affect the current issues.
 - E. Racism can be interpersonal, where one person responds to another in a way that is based on racist beliefs. Policies and practices come into play when looking at systemic racism.
 - F. Conversations about the issues should be normalized, but there is currently a lot of denial. These are not individual issues, but over generations it impacts us as a society. Avoiding conversations about racism only created further obstacles in achieving health equity for those suffering the most and consequently the entire nation.
 - G. Overview of demographics that make up Brown County by community.
 - H. When looking at life expectancy differences, it is startling to see the differences for People of Color compared to their white counterparts.
 - i. Only eastern Asian countries are considered in data and does not include western Asia such as India, Pakistan, and others.
 - ii. Differences in life expectancy is much larger in Brown County than in other counties of similar sizes and populations in Wisconsin.
 - iii. Variations are a result of factors such as housing disparities, microaggressions, access to and discrimination within healthcare that POC experience.
 - I. There is a need for awareness and training from the top down.
 - i. If work is not established in terms of policy, there will not be a difference made.
 - ii. Instead, the disparities will continue to burden the non-profits.
 - iii. Change must come from leadership, so the question is whether leaders are ready to take on this work.
 - iv. Vice Chair Cobb asked if there were other counties where life expectancies by demographic were close.
 - v. Chair Dr. Bambha-Arora responded that only counties similar in size were included.
 - vi. Supervisor Buckley asked if there was data on causes of death as it relates to life expectancy, because if so, that could be a focus area to work backwards from.
 - vii. Chair Dr. Bambha-Arora responded that many health factors lead up to this such as stress, hypertension, high blood pressure, heart ailments, which are fewer in white populations, in addition to lack of access to things like housing and jobs. She shared a story of someone suggesting she change her name to more "white sounding" name when applying for jobs.
 - J. People in Brown County are more likely to work in industries with lower wages as compared to white populations.
 - i. Poorer work conditions.
 - ii. Discriminatory practices.
 - iii. Black and Latinx suffer the most regarding lack of employment accessibility.

- K. COVID hospitalizations are disproportionately higher for people of color.
 - i. White people make up 90% of the population but only 74% of hospitalizations.
 - ii. Black people make up 7% of the population but 12% of hospitalizations.
 - iii. Latinx and Asian populations also represent hospitalization greater than their overall population.
 - iv. COVID deaths are higher for people of color due to lower immune response resulting from social determinants and inequitable access to resources.
 - v. People of color are more likely to be front line workers who do not have the luxury to stay at home.
- L. Housing, in collaboration with Green Bay chamber of commerce.
 - i. Stems from redlining, preventing POC from getting loans.
 - ii. Debt to income ratio, employment history, credit history, collateral, insufficient cash, unverifiable information, credit application incomplete, mortgage insurance denied makes it much easier for white populations to get loans.
 - iii. Application rejection rates are 23-29% for POC, compared to just 10 % for whites, indicating a large gap to fill as a society.
- M. Small businesses startups
 - i. Does not provide equitable opportunities for talented, creative, intelligent people of color.
 - ii. Most venture capital backed startups have white ownerships.
 - iii. Keep in mind that not all data is collected, tracked, or analyzed, and there is room for potentially greater inequalities.
- N. Work should be grounded in the 5-factor social determinant of health in Brown County.
 - i. Social and community context.
 - ii. Economic stability.
 - iii. Neighborhood/ environment.
 - iv. Education.
 - v. Quality healthcare access.
- O. Things to consider going forward.
 - i. How do we approach this as a committee?
 - ii. What problems do we want to solve?
 - iii. What data can we get and what does it tell us?
 - iv. What communities will be engaged and how?
 - v. Who will benefit from or be burden by our proposals?
 - vi. How will we mitigate unintended consequences?
 - vii. What will be the implementation plan?
 - viii. How will we ensure accountability, communicate, and evaluate results?
- P. The CDC recently changed their model to focus on social determinants of health, rather than research and data being the target area, emphasizing the public health framework.
- Q. Wello is working to send out joint communications emails to other organizations to identify one or two steps they have taken to move towards diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- R. Casa Alba
 - i. Deeply moving testaments collected regarding law enforcement separating children from families and appointing guardians.
 - ii. Committee member Villa added that factory work opportunities attract first generation immigrants. If there is no identification available, family members are put into the system until parents' immigration status can be verified.
 - iii. This limits community members' ability to move freely and perform daily activities.

- S. Next steps for committee members.
 - i. Meet in smaller sub-groups between meetings to better understand framework.
 - ii. Meet with department heads one on one.
 - iii. Better understand policy and push leadership to improve equitable access for all in Brown County.
 - iv. Create small workgroups to address issues such as housing, law enforcement, jobs.
 - v. Work towards advisory report by end of year.
 - vi. Define quarterly goals to identify strategy and decision making.
 - vii. Engage GARE or other agency to train county employees and work with the committee.
 - viii. Build community partners and coalitions.
 - ix. Create a toolkit and checklist for all organizations, especially county departments to ensure inclusion outside of a white dominant framework.
 - x. Assign a budget to address racial inequality.
 - xi. Have a chapter established in the county code of ordinances that address equality and equity.
- T. Conversation on next steps
 - i. Secretary Padron stated full support of GARE to steer efforts and suggested taking the data presented to the Executive Board for buy in.
 - ii. Vice Chair Cobb stated that getting HR involved to assess current efforts is an important next step so they may potentially collaborate with GARE.
- U. Chair Dr. Bambha-Arora invited all committee members to submit ideas for the advisory report.
- V. Comments on work group proposal
 - i. Committee member Villa potentially part of addressing financial literacy, along with Committee member Yang.
 - ii. Chair, vice chair, and secretary have been looking at housing.
 - iii. Committee member Abrego-Koch to discuss food access.
 - iv. Vice Chair Cobb inquired about FISC, a financial literacy program.
 - v. Committee member Villa discussed work with college students in which if monetary assistance is provided, participants are required to complete a financial literacy course. A similar incentive could be utilized in other organizations that provide financial support with increased engagement efforts.
 - vi. Vice Chair Cobb added that a small steering team has proven to be the most effective so far and suggested to wait on forming groups to address specific issues until more direction has been established.
- W. Conversation on what stood out from the presentation.
 - i. Vice Chair Cobb- graphic comparing percentages of populations to percentages of outcomes.
 - ii. Supervisor Buckley- the detail of the data breaks down goals into actionable items such as employment, education, and health.
 - iii. Chair Dr. Bambha-Arora suggested having a checklist for local organizations for implementing diversity and inclusion and encouraging them to collect data. We will come up with a framework that can be used in the county, such as having hard conversations using words like "racism". We can look at brining conversations like the ones had here to the county board.
 - iv. Supervisor Borchardt- looking at gaps in age of expected lifespan.
 - v. Committee member Abrego-Koch- the numbers with that data really stood out. The idea of having three simultaneous tracks was offered: assess brown county employees;

identify the issues and how can we address them; and educating Brown County community members of the issues as a public health crisis.

- vi. Chari Dr. Bambha-Arora stated that GARE could help with the top-down approach to coordinate the necessary trainings, to understand the urgency of the framework, and to implement policy.
- vii. Secretary Padron- the numbers stood out and helped to bring a better understanding of the concepts in more concrete terms.
- viii. Committee member Villa agreed that the numbers stood out, especially how they are specific to the Brown County community. The data brings the ideas closer to home, rather than only seeing nationwide data. This will help other people see the need to act.
- ix. Committee member Abrego-Koch added that many parents insist that children are not affected by COVID, but when they are the children of frontline workers, they are at greater risk. There is a need to assess the differences between schools in Green Bay compared to those in surrounding communities when it comes to the risk.

7. General Update from chair and committee members.

A. Gare Representative Update.

- i. Supervisor Erickson has reached out to GARE and provided goals that were discussed.
- ii. Inquired how a GARE representative could best help the committee.
- iii. Brown County is unique, in that there is not a designated office, department or coordinator for civil rights.
- iv. Went over GARE toolkit in which we can focus on the county as an institution.
- v. Madison and Seattle were used as examples that have implemented this toolkit in decision making since approximately 2013.
- vi. In 2015, Seattle recommended all departments go through this toolkit 4 times annually to ensure intentional inclusivity and a racial justice lens is used in any decision making to break down unintended consequences and see who is being burdened compared to who is being advantaged.
- vii. Chair Dr. Bambha-Arora stated that she will continue to follow up, along with Supervisor Erickson and anticipates Committee Member Yang will as well. If efforts are not successful, other organizations can be explored such as Race and Social Justice Initiative or MATCH.

B. Expanding the Racial Equity Committee.

- i. Supervisor Borchardt stated that increasing committee members would be difficult because the numbers are in the resolution, so a proposal must go back in front of the full board and executive committee.
- ii. Supervisor Buckley stated that any additional members would have to be approved by Supervisor Seibert.
- iii. Supervisor Erickson welcomed committee members to invite others- family, allies, board members- to sit in on these conversations. Additionally, elections are coming up and if some members run and become supervisor members, more citizens would be needed.
- iv. Supervisor Borchardt has encouraged other members to come to this meeting.
- v. Chair Dr. Bambha-Arora would like to invite people from area organizations such as Casa Alba or Wise Women to provide stories of their personal experiences of discrimination.
- vi. Supervisor Erickson stated that if community members are not comfortable speaking during public comments, they can still be heard.
- vii. Secretary Padron suggested sharing our own stories and experiences as people of color, if there is a struggle recruiting other community members.

- viii. Supervisor Borchardt suggested inviting community members to email their experiences in place of public comments.
 - C. Vice Chair Cobb shared an upcoming event, Tour One Wisconsin Conference, that will take place in Eau Claire on October 12th and 14th. Additional information will be sent for distribution to entire group.
 - D. Discussion on incorporating Green Bay Schools Inner City Student Council members and youth mentorship programs in the committee meetings.
 - E. Supervisor Borchardt asked if meeting time can be moved to 5:30, which will be discussed at next meeting.
8. Adjourn
- A. Motion made by Chair Dr. Bambha-Arora
 - B. Motion seconded by Supervisor Borchardt
 - C. Motion approved unanimously
 - D. Racial Equity Ad Hoc Committee meeting adjourned until Monday August 23, 2021, at 5:00 PM.

Appendix A

What adversities disproportionately affect BIPOC?	Services Available	Connected Committee members	Brown County Services
Housing/ homelessness	Brown County Homeless and Housing Coalition	Megan	
	Local shelters- NEW Community, St. Johns, etc.	Pooja	
	NEW Cap	Carina	
	Neighborworks	Rashad	
Unemployment/ work conditions	Achieve Brown County	Pooja	
	Department of Workforce development	Rashad	
	Library	Pooja	
	Media/ job posting sites		
Incarceration			Jail
			Courts
	JOSHUA	Megan	
	Fire and Police Commission	Rashad	
Health			Public Health Department
	Hospitals/ clinics- Bellin, Prevea, St. Mary, St. Vincent, Aurora, etc.		
	NEW Community Clinic		
<i>Drug/ alcohol use</i>	Family Services of NE WI	Rashad	
	Jackie Nitschke Center	Carina	
			Treatment court
	Oneida Behavioral Health	Louise	

<i>Mental Health</i>			Mental Health Comm. Treatment Ctr.
			Jail Counseling Services
	Willow Creek	Rashad	
	Connections for Mental Wellness	Megan	
<i>Women's healthcare</i>	A & A Alexandria Center		
	Planned Parenthood	Carina	
Food access		Megan	Community Gardens
Domestic violence	Sexual Assault Center	Carina	
	Shelters- Golden House, Freedom House, House of Hope, etc.		
Child protection	Willow Tree	Rashad	
		Megan	Child Protection Services
	Oneida ICW	Louise	
Arts	Art Garage	Pooja	
	United Arts	Pooja	
Various service areas	Forward Services		
	Family Services	Rashad	
	We All Rise AARC		
	Wello	Pooja	
	Wise Women Gathering Place	Louise	